

REMARKS

Applicant has amended the claims. Claim 1 has been amended in order to better specify the steps for the definition of the first and second recesses. Claim 1 now explicitly refers to movable inserts (22) which in a first extracted position define the first recesses (16) together with the sliding elements (20). The movable inserts (22) are subsequently retracted in order to permit to the sliding elements to reach a further position in which they define a second recess together with the fixed and/or mobile parts of the mould. Support for the amended claim language can be found on page 12, lines 14-24; page 13, lines 7-23 of the originally filed application.

Claims 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11 have been amended in order to improve clarity and/or to overcome the objections of the Examiner.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Nishida (U.S. Patent No.: 6,365,083).

Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Contrary to the assertions of the Examiner with regard to claim 10, Nishida does not disclose any opening step of at least a movable insert (22). See page 5, line 1, of the current Office Action.

The mould described in the Nishida patent does not teach additional movable inserts for the definition of the recesses for the first injection step. In fact, Nishida only refers to sliding elements moving within a plane orthogonally to each other.

Therefore, said prior art documents fails to disclose an opening step of such elements. As such it the Nishida patent can not anticipate claim 10 since it fails to teach all the elements found in the rejected claim.

The displacement of the inserts (22) according to the invention, allows the present invention to define recesses of various forms, while maintaining the ability to displace the sliding element and move the first moulded parts into a second position in order to define a second injection recess.

Additionally, Nishida fails to disclose the definition steps of the recesses, wherein the

recesses are defined by a dynamic combination of the surface portions of at least two of the following elements: the mobile part of the mould, the fixed part of the mould, the sliding elements, the first moulded parts and the inserts. According to the invention, the first recesses are defined, in part, by the coupling of a portion of the surface of the sliding elements with a portion of the surface of the inserts; the second recesses are defined, in part, by the coupling of a portion of the surface of the sliding elements and a portion of said fixed and/or mobile parts. The cited prior art patent, Nishida, does not teach this functionality.

In Nishida, the recess for the first injection is defined by the coupling of the sliding elements with each other or with the fixed part of the mould only. Additionally, the recess for the second injection is defined by the coupling of the first moulded parts with each other and with the sliding elements only. Therefore, with this method it is not possible to mould pieces having a particularly complex shape, e.g. having an inner and an outer element.

On the contrary, the present invention overcomes the limitations of the cited prior art and is capable of moulding pieces of very different and complex shapes as it can be seen from the miscellaneous embodiments described in the patent application. In fact, depending on the dynamic combination of the a.m. surface portions and depending on the impressions on said surface portions, it is possible to mould very complex shapes comprising more than one part, the different parts being made of different materials.

The Examiner has rejected claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishida.

Applicant respectfully disagrees.

The rejected claim is dependent on claim 10. Applicant has demonstrated that claim 10 is not anticipated. Therefore, it is impossible for claim 11 to be obvious in light of the Nishida patent, since said patent fails to teach the invention as a whole.

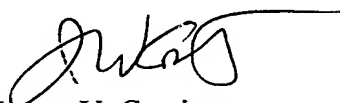
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Examiner: KRAMER, Devon C

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CONCLUSION

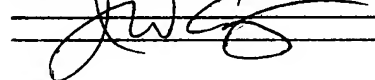
An early and favorable decision is expected.

Respectfully Submitted,



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